

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A NEW NEWS LETTER

FEBRUARY 15, 1988

HORACE S. SILLS BECOMES INTERIM CONFERENCE MINISTER

The Winter Olympics have just begun in Calgary, Alberta and the citizens of each nation represented will watch excitedly as their youth compete for top honors. May it be that the decision makers of those nations will watch and learn from the struggles of the athletes who have a different understanding of victory than that taught on a field encompassed about by war. And may it be that every participant in these games will experience the thrill of winning friendship, team spirit, and honor among all others.

This is also the beginning of what is expected to be a short term as Interim Conference Minister of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ for the Rev. Dr. Horace S. Sills. The Rev. Dr. Emmitt O. Floyd retired effective December 31, 1987. The Conference Board of Directors invited Mr. Sills to fill this administrative post while a search for a new Conference Minister is under way. Horace and Louise Sills arrived in Atlanta on January 19, and have been busy since that time working on priorities of administration assigned by the Board of Directors.

Dr. Sills is no stranger to Conference administration. He served as Conference Executive of the Penn West Conference, and the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. He retired from Penn Central on December 31, 1985, after twelve years in that position. He has also served an administration post at the Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Penn., where he was Vice President, and where he continues an adjunct professor relationship.

Neither is Mr. Sills a stranger to the Southeast Conference. While serving as Field Secretary of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, during the 1960's, Sills was assigned responsibilities for Church Extension in this Conference. During those years he became acquainted with many congregations and pastors here and hopes to renew those relationships.

In response to an inquiry about his expectations during this interim, Dr. Sills stated: "I want very much to be a close associate to those congregations searching for pastoral leadership, and those pastors wanting to make a change. Although some serious attention will be given to the administrative needs in the Conference office, it is my expectation that much of my time during this interim will be spent in visiting clusters of pastors and lay people, speaking in churches on invitation, and listening carefully to the concerns of everyone related to the United Church of Christ in this area. I want to receive suggestions from the people about programs, and also to learn from them how they feel I might be of the most service to the Conference in the time available to me. I solicit the prayers of all as we move forward together."

THE SEARCH PROCESS FOR A NEW CONFERENCE MINISTER

Following the announcement of Dr. Floyd's retirement, the Conference Board of Directors appointed a Search Committee to begin screening candidates for this important administrative and prophetic post. That Committee has been hard at work ever since and hopes to be in a position soon to announce the results of its activity. The timetable established by the Board is that a candidate will be presented to the Board of Directors at its March meeting, and then to the delegates to the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference in June. The election will be by vote of the delegates to that meeting of Conference. As soon as the name of the candidate is ready to be presented to the Board of Directors, the pastors and congregations of the Conference will be notified through an official announcement. The Search Committee and the entire Board of Directors solicits your prayers during this very important process.

#### CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Conference will meet on March 11 & 12, 1988, in Central Congregational U.C.C. Church, Atlanta. The opening session will begin at 7:00 P.M. on the 11th. Important reports from staff, officers, and committees, as well as an agenda for the meeting will be mailed to all Board members two weeks prior to the meeting. Those needing overnight accommodations or transportation arrangements are urged to notify the Conference office as soon as possible. Those members coming from some distance are urged to car-pool, if at all possible.

For those who think and plan ahead, please record the following dates: March 11, Conference Finance Committee, March 11, Conference Outreach Committee, August 11-13, Conference Board of Directors retreat, November 4 & 5, Board of Directors meeting. (Please note other dates at the end of this News Letter)

#### THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH, SEWANEE, TENNESSEE - JUNE 11-12, 1988

The clergy and lay delegates from the congregations of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ will gather for their Annual business, educational, and spiritual meeting, on June 11 through 12. All activities will be conducted on the beautiful campus of the University of the South, at Sewanee, Tennessee. It is the hope of the Board of Directors and the Planning Committee for this event that every congregation will be represented and that there will be many visitors from our congregations. Although final plans have not been completed, the churches should know that the Theme for this meeting will be: "ON HOLY GROUND." Our time together will be a time for sharing, learning, singing, praying, and celebrating our life together as people of God who understand about Holy Ground. Full details and registration materials will be mailed to all congregations by the first of May.

#### SOUTHEAST NEWS

The New Newsletter you are reading (we sure do hope you have

gotten this far) is not a replacement for the SOUTHEAST NEWS, nor is it expected to be a substitute for that nationally famous information sheet. What it is (the Newsletter) is just a temporary way for us to communicate with all the pastors and congregations we love and respect while the publication of the SOUTHEAST NEWS is being evaluated. We need to learn more about the readers of the SOUTHEAST NEWS, the kinds of news you feel would be most helpful, the format in which you would find it more readable, and any thing else you can tell us to guide this process. And besides all that, we do not now have an Editor for the SOUTHEAST NEWS. ALL APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED. APPLICANTS NEED TO KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT THE PAY IS LOW (we just don't have any money to pay anybody) BUT THE RESPECT ONE RECEIVES IS WORTH A FORTUNE! Send your cards and letters now and let us know if you will apply for the job with the important title of EDITOR OF THE FAMOUS SOUTHEAST NEWS. It could start you on a whole new career, but remember how low the pay is. Then, too, remember how much you will be appreciated.

#### OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION

Although the above paragraph about the job of Editor of the Southeast News was written with a touch of humor, there is also a lot of truth to it as well. The Southeast Conference is a recipient of the mission endeavors of the local congregations within this geographical area. The activities of the Conference staff, the programs we seek to provide for churches and pastors, the assistance given to new church starts, the help in time of need to local pastors and congregations, and the funds we send on to share in the world wide mission work of the entire United Church of Christ come to us from no other source than the local churches of the Southeast Conference. God in Christ Jesus calls us to mission activity beyond our own church buildings and local communities. This Conference needs to have you share in the larger work we face daily. We urge local treasurers to send benevolent gifts on a regular basis (monthly if at all possible) so the obligations of the Conference and denomination can be met on time. This, too, is the work of Christ.

#### THE CONFERENCE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

As we move toward the Annual Meeting of Conference, the Nominating Committee is hard at work to find people who are willing to be nominated to fill positions on the Conference Board of Directors, the several Commissions, committees and task groups working to provide programs and resources to assist congregations in their mission. The Nominating Committee needs your assistance in recruiting persons for these tasks. If you know of persons with special skills, special interests, and who are willing to share their time and talents with one of these Conference organizations, please contact the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, Mrs. Virginia McCamey at the Conference office, P. O. Box 29883, 2676 Clairmont Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga., 30359. We also need a few persons to nominate for possible election to several National U.C.C. offices.

#### A SPECIAL CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

On Saturday, February 27, hundreds of friends of the Rev. Joyce B. Myers, Southern Regional Staff Person for the Office For Church Life And Leadership, and the Rev. Edward M. Brown of Atlanta, will come from all over the world to join the couple in the Central Congregational U.C.C. Church in Atlanta for a very special celebration of Marriage. It will be a time of rejoicing and praise and a time of reunion for those whose lives have been touched so deeply by this wonderful couple. The people of the churches of the Southeast Conference and its staff extend to Joyce and Ed our very best CONGRATULATIONS and warmest best wishes for much happiness in the years ahead.

#### SPECIAL DATES TO REMEMBER

Listed below are some important dates for meetings and other events in the life of the Southeast Conference. We call these to your attention and urge all persons involved to adjust calendars accordingly. We will up-date the Conference calendar on a monthly basis. Those with dates and events to share, please get that information to the Conference Office by the 10th of each month.

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
FEB. 20	EAST ALABAMA LADIES NIGHT	WADLEY, ALABAMA
FEB. 20	8:00 A.M. GEORGIA/S.C. ASSOC. EXEC. COMMITTEE	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
	10:00 A.M. CONFERENCE NOMINATING COMM.	" "
FEB. 26	CONFERENCE STAFF MEETING	" "
MARCH 5	AREA WIDE MISSION STRATEGY TASK GROUP	CHATTANOOGA, TEN.
MARCH 5	WESTERN CLUSTER MEETING	ALEXANDER CITY, AL
MARCH 6	NORTH ALABAMA CLUSTER MEETING	CADDY, ALA.
MARCH 10-12	O.C.I.S. REGIONAL NETWORK TRAINING	RALEIGH, N. C.
MARCH 11-12	CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MARCH 11	CONFERENCE FINANCE COMMITTEE	" "
MARCH 11	CONFERENCE OUTREACH COMMITTEE	" "
MARCH 11-13	ALA/TENN ASSOC. YOUTH POP-IN	CHATTANOOGA, TEN.
MARCH 19	ALA/TENN ASSOC. EXECUTIVE COMM.	" "
APRIL 8	SO.ALA/N.W. FLA. CLUSTER	BRANTLEY, ALABAMA
APRIL 15	EASTERN CLUSTER	LaGRANGE, GEORGIA
APRIL 16	GA/S.C. ASSOC. STEWARDSHIP WORK SHOP	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
APRIL 22-24	SPRING MINI-CAMP	LaGUNA BEACH, FLA.
MAY 16-19	MINISTER'S CONVOCATION RETREAT	BLOWING ROCK, N.C.
MAY 20	EASTERN CLUSTER	LaGRANGE, GEORGIA
MAY 21	EAST ALA. MEN'S FELLOWSHIP	(?)
JUNE 10-12	SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING	SEWANEE, TENNESSEE
SEPT. 16-17	ALA/TENN ASSOC. ANNUAL MEETING	SWEETWATER, TENN.
OCT. 1	N. ALA. ASSOC. ANNUAL MEETING	ARLEY, ALABAMA
OCT. 8	SO. ALA./ N.W. FLA. ANNUAL MEETING	(?)
OCT. 15	E. ALA. ASSOC. ANNUAL MEETING	LANETT, ALABAMA
OCT. 16	CENTRAL ALA. ANNUAL MEETING	ECLECTIC, ALABAMA
OCT. 21	EASTERN CLUSTER	LaGRANGE, GEORGIA
OCT. 21-22	GA./S.C. ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING	THOMASVILLE, GA.

More to come later. Look for another "New Newsletter" about March 15, 1988.